Illegal mining in Panna

3350. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that over 90 per cent of the diamonds (worth approximately Rs. 12 crore) mined in placer deposits (shallow mines) and conglomerates spread over two dozen villages are sold illegally or smuggled out of Panna (M.P.) to polishing units in Mumbai and Surat;

(b) whether it is a fact that there are over 3,000 illegal mines in villages in Panna districts; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to curtail the illegal mining in Panna?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. DASARI NARYANA RAO): (a) and (b) As per information furnished by State Government of Madhya Pradesh, it is not true that 90 percent of diamonds found in placer deposits are sold illegally or smuggled out of Panna (M.P.) to polishing units in Mumbai and Surat. State Government of Madhya Pradesh has also denied the existence of 3000 illegal mines in villages in Panna district. However, 4 cases of illegal mining around Panna district have been detected in which action has been taken by the State Government.

(c) To effectively curb illicit mining, State Governments have been empowered to make rules for preventing illegal mining, transportation and storage of minerals under the provisions of Section 23C of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957.

Exploration of Mineral Deposits in A.P.

3351. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had given approval for sanctioning of reconnaissance permit to Andhra Pradesh Government for exploring mineral deposits in Kurnul, Anantpur, Prakasam, Cuddapah, Chittar, Nellore, Mehaboobnagar, Rangareddy, Guntur and Bukkapattnam districts of the State;